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Anarchist news and views from Aotearoa/NZ.....#13 May/June 2000 FREE



**may day
2000**

**a black day
for capitalism**



inside

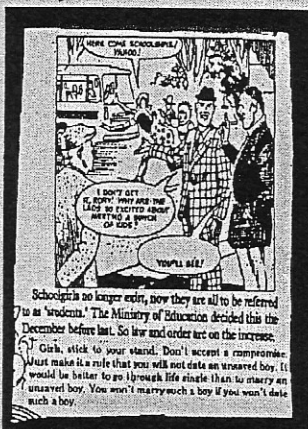
reports from may day
anti-capitalist pro-
tests around aotearoa
and across the globe

thrall

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some stamps

After a couple of years of being quite regular, *Thrall* has come down with a few mild complications and so it looks like it will be coming out more irregularly from now on. This issue of *Thrall* has been produced on an ancient Mac computer that doesn't have the old *Thrall* PC fonts, hence the slightly different look for this issue. Plus our coloured banner is temporarily unavailable – so this issue appears in glorious monocolour. Special thanx to everyone who supplied photos (on disc and print) for this issue. Front cover photo: anarcho-feminist flag waved high on the Wellington Carnival against Capitalism.



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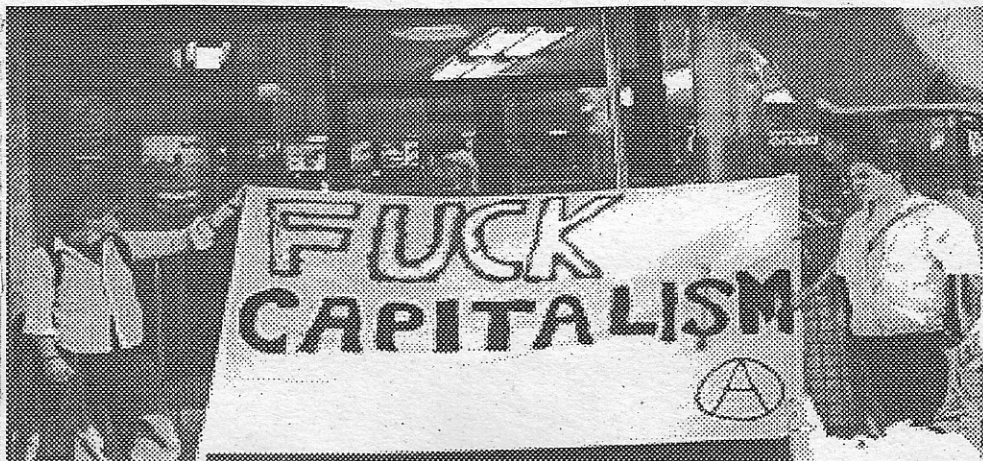
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There are also anarchists in Dunedin.
Contact *Thrall* for details.

may day may day may day



Protesters in front of Manners Mall McDonald's, Wellington, May Day

This issue of *Thrall* is a May Day 2000 special, covering the worldwide day of action against capitalism on May the 1st this year. After a couple of decades of people being bashed by the ruling class through their new found ideology of the free market, it seems that the tide could be turning. Many people worldwide are questioning the globalisation of misery under capitalism today. And anarchists are in the forefront of this growing anti-capitalist movement to the shock of the establishment, bourgeois media.

LONDON – SEATTLE – WASHINGTON – MAY DAY

So what is May Day? Why was May Day 2000 an international day of action against capitalism? May Day is traditionally international workers day. It is held on May 1st in commemoration of the Haymarket "martyrs" last century. Four anarchists were executed for their part in organising a mass demonstration for an eight hour day in Chicago on May 1st 1886. Since then, May Day has become a day to display working class solidarity and struggle worldwide. But over time May Day has become somewhat stale – it became divorced from any real grassroots working class struggle (like struggle for the eight hour day) and so was hijacked by bureaucratic trade unions. So May Day became often reduced to a meaningless trade union ritual. The May Day global day of action against capitalism goes some way to reclaim May Day as a day of radical struggle.

J18: REFURBISHING THE CITY OF LONDON

May Day 2000 followed in the successful examples of June 18th 1999 and November 30th 1999, also both international days of action against capitalism. June 18th (J18) protests occurred in many countries; this was possibly the first time internationally co-ordinated protests had been held against capitalism. The rationale behind this global action was in J18 publicity "the global capitalist system is based upon the exploitation of people and the planet for the profit of a few and is at the very root of our social and ecological troubles today". They recognised that people, the world over, are being done over by the same thing: capitalism. As the global capitalist elite, their transnational corporations and their puppets the IMF and WTO impose free market policies on every country on the planet, they are unwittingly creating a situation where diverse movements are recognising each others struggles and are beginning to work together on an unprecedented scale.

J18 in London was a particularly important and impressive event. Over 10,000 turned up to

occupy the financial district of London for a day.

After police provocation, the day turned out to be the biggest riot in Britain since the poll tax rebellion of 1990. Protesters caused millions of pounds worth of damage, smashing many properties of the financial centre. J18 in London was a highly significant act: it was the first demo held specifically against capitalism; thus there were no reformist demands, no appeals to trade unions or the Labour Party; demonstrators simply showed their resistance to capitalism in a direct and exemplary fashion without any mediation from anyone.

SEATTLE & WASHINGTON:
FROM THE HEART OF THE BEAST OF
GLOBAL CAPITALISM

The November 30th international protests were highlighted by the "battle of Seattle". Well over 50,000 people occupied the streets of Seattle and shut down a meeting of the World Trade Organisation. This event was also highly significant: it was the biggest protest in the US since the anti-Vietnam war movement of the 1960s. The actions of protesters in the streets of Seattle were very radical and unique in the US context. USA is a very right-wing country that normally has no or little protest against any aspects of capitalism. The inspiration of Seattle clearly led to the recent large-scale protests against the World Bank and IMF in Washington.

So now we have the bourgeois media like the BBC proclaiming that these global protests amount to a new wave of protest, a new cause for a generation just like the Vietnam war was for the 60s generation. As well, the bourgeois media has focussed on the role of anarchists in the movement who they correctly call "anti-capitalists". This represents an important change – for the first time in living memory it is not "communists" or Marxists who are considered in the media to be the main opposition to the status quo. The "communist" bogey seems to be dead. The radical, direct action wing of the anti-globalisation movement is explicitly anarchist. Yay!

may day around aotearoa

Traditional May Day rallies were held in Dunedin, Palmerston North and Auckland, whilst specifically anti-capitalist demonstrations, stunts, and events were held in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, and Hamilton. The largest May Day event in the country was the Wellington Carnival Against Capitalism, which is covered on pages four and five.

dunedin

For the first time in some years May Day was marked with a rally in Dunedin this year. People's Global Action, a group of anarchists based at the Dunedin Environment Centre, organised a small march to join the trade union rally in the Octagon. The march was comprised of anarchists, International Socialists members and others. The IS chants "2-4-6-8, Give us back our welfare state" drew a few "Fuck the State" responses from the anarchists.

At the Octagon rally CTU (Council of Trade Unions) speakers praised the "election of a workers' government" and urged us to "get in behind the Labour/Alliance Government" to support changes in industrial relations legislation. "The government is giving us the tools" we were told, "they've asked us to do it - it's our job to respond".

In contrast, Cathy Matthews, representing workers from the Milton lock-out, stressed grassroots solidarity. This dispute was at the cutting edge of opposition to the ECA. "We maintained the picket for eight years, we stood solid as a group and made decisions as a group... We considered the effects on everyone when we made a decision... If workers stand together in solidarity they can achieve their goals. We must take up the challenge of educating workers on the need for collectivism".



In Dunedin they gave out free samosas, and in Wellington they handed out free veggie burgers outside McDonald's (pictured)

The union rally was followed by an anarchist organised "Festival against Capitalism" with bands, music and a samosa stall.

- Joe.

According to Critic, the Otago Uni student paper, 30 people attended the "anti-capitalist march" and about 100-150 attended the union rally.

christchurch

The global day of action against capitalism was kicked off in Christchurch by activists gluing the local WINZ (Social Welfare) office doors overnight. They then threw stink bombs into four banks (including ANZ, BNZ and Westpac Trust) on May Day itself. The banks were temporarily evacuated. The "bombs" were delivered with a communique from the activists:

BANKS STINK

This action has been carried out to bring attention to the disgusting treatment banks hand out to their customers. Crippling bank fees and branch closures are hurting the elderly and the poor, who are the most vulnerable members of society. It is time that the people of New Zealand stood up and made their voice heard.

The night before anti-capitalist activists circulated a large number of leaflets from a "Neighbourhood Watch" group in some affluent suburbs of Christchurch such as Fendalton. The leaflet warned residents that anti-capitalist protests by beneficiaries and the like were planned in their areas on May Day, and thus gave advice to not leave vehicles out on the street and to secure their homes and property. Some concerned residents got quite upset about the alleged event and the hoax was reported in the *Christchurch Press*. Unfortunately, plans by local anarchists to hold an anti-capitalist May Day demonstration in the city centre fell through.

hamilton

A Bucket? Fuckit picket occurred in Hamilton on May Day as part of the global day of action against capitalism. The Frankton branch of Kentucky Fried Chicken was picketed because it has the largest "KFC bucket" in the country, a horrid eyesore which dominates the skyline of Frankton, a working class suburb. Locals hate the bucket and have organised a petition to remove it. Protesters, including Crackers the Corporate Crime Fighting Chicken, chanted "people not profit...kick the bucket!" and "It's time for capitalism to kick the bucket". The picket also focussed on the low wages youth workers receive at places like KFC.

auckland

Two-hundred people turned out for the traditional May Day march from QE2 square to Aotea Square. The march and rally was organised by the trade union supported May Day committee, hence the event focussed upon the new Employment Relations Bill and its effects on unions. Surprisingly nobody threw things when a Labour MP got up and said how worker friendly the government is. The march was attended by trade unionists, anarchists, Marxist-Leninists of several different varieties and people from the Water Pressure group, a group which takes direct action against water privatisation. The highlight of the march was the appearance of the Water Pressure fire engine, which is used by Water Pressure to turn on water mains to the houses of residents who refuse to pay for their water.

26 september the next global day of action

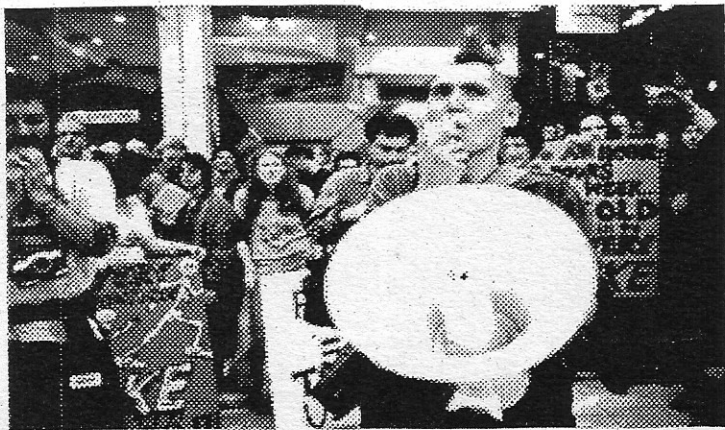
The next Global Day of Action against capitalism is to coincide with the Annual General Meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank, to be held in Prague (Czech Republic) on 26-28th September. Large protests are planned, with groups already co-ordinating internationally in the spirit of "our resistance is as global as capital". Czech police have already announced that any demonstrations will be banned, streets closed, and the 20,000 delegates be given a "protective ring" of 11,000 police.

The IMF and World Bank are the stooges of multinationals. The IMF and World Bank



impose free-market policies on countries with the result being poverty, crippling levels of debt, and massive profits for multinationals. For example, since the Czech Republic joined the IMF/World Bank in 1990, the result has been job losses, inaccessible health care and education, sharp increases in living costs, unemployment, the destruction of the environment and the curtailment of union rights. Sound familiar? (*SchNEWS*)

Check out internet websites go.to/s26 www.destroyimf.org and x21.org/s26/



wellington carnival against capitalism

May Day went off in Wellington! A quite successful and unique Carnival against Capitalism organised by local anarchist group the Committee for the Establishment of Civilisation (CEC) was held on May Day in Wellington. Overall, probably 500+ people attended the combined events of the day, a huge and inspiring turnout. The carnival consisted of several parties, demos and marches throughout the day, with each event flowing into the next. Events ranged from a party outside the Freedom Shop (local anarchist bookstore, celebrating its fifth birthday), to a protest outside influential local capitalist lobby group, the Business Roundtable, to protests outside local chains of multinational capitalist exploiters McDonalds and Nike (Rebel Sport, a Nike retailer, was targeted) to a "Reclaim the City" march down Lambton Quay, the financial and bureaucratic centre of Wellington which houses the various ministries of the government.

RECLAIMING MAY DAY

May Day is not a public holiday in Aotearoa, and this year May Day fell on a working day (Monday). As well, Wellington is a conservative city (it's got the highest proportion of bureaucrats and various functionaries of the state in Aotearoa) that traditionally has extremely boring and small May Day protests of about 20 people. Last year at May Day apparently some Trotskyists got up and spoke about such nonsense as "the deformed workers' state" of North Korea. A big demonstration in Wellington is anything

over about 50 people, and normally demos organised by a radical group with radical themes such as the abolition of capitalism are virtually unheard of. In fact, has anybody heard of a demo held in Aotearoa specifically against capitalism? So, normally one would expect a tiny turnout for an event like this which specifically aimed for the abolition of capitalism. Thus the big turnout was really great.

CAPITALISM SUCKS ASS

The turnout was definitely helped by a fluoro orange sticker campaign, which advertised the event all over Wellington with stickers like Eric Cartman from South Park saying "Capitalism Sucks Ass" – the stickers were everywhere, and it seemed like everybody noticed them. Other forms of advertising were used, like video evenings, a carnival against capitalism gig, posters (one suggesting we should "evict the rich") and banners urging people to take the day off work (which were hung up on the motorway). In the end, quite a few people took the day off.

Protesters ranged from anarchists, to environmentalists (a good number of people from Native Forest Action attended), to Maori radicals, to Rastafarians, to university and high school students. Even a few Trotskyists attended in two groups of five with placards like "Expropriate the banks and industries" (yes, but that doesn't have to mean the state should run industries on behalf of workers; workers can do it themselves, OK?) The protest

looked really colourful, with good banners and heaps of black flags and black and red flags, a couple of tino rangatiratanga flags, and even a few red flags were spotted.

THROWING AWAY MONEY

The Carnival against Capitalism was supposed to be just that: a carnival, not a boring, staid procession that most protest marches turn out to be. For the most part, the event was reasonably fun, with several spontaneous acts lightening up proceedings (such as breakdancing in Manners Mall). Most people on the carnival enjoyed the day out. Having a portable PA system attached to a bicycle definitely helped, as did the giving away of hundreds of lollipops with slogans on them such as "capitalism sucks", "work sucks", "school sucks", "anarchy is sweet". Several people got dressed up for the occasion, including the grim reaper (capitalism as death, maybe?) and one dressed as Monty Burns (the evil tycoon from the Simpsons). Mr. Burns wandered around with a placard "Gimmie! Gimmie! Gimmie!" and often got beaten up by protesters. As well, 3000 fake \$20 bills were distributed to passers by in an attempt to undermine the capitalist economy by giving money away for free. On the back of the notes there were different anti-capitalist rants, ranging from a rant against the World Bank, to statistical information about the effects of capitalism, to a situationist rant against mechanisation and boredom at work under capitalism. These fake notes were hugely popular – instead of the usual





New Zealand Business Roundtable
89 The Terrace, Wellington, New Zealand.
Filthy Rich Bloodsucking Parasites.

indifference people have to receiving leaflets, people actually came up to leaflet distributors and asked for more of the notes!

On the whole, press coverage of the carnival was very poor. TV news ignored it. Newspaper coverage was widespread but very limited. It seems like the press would only cover such a radical demo if arrests or a trashing of McDonald's had taken place. As there were no arrests, there was no coverage. Police took a low key approach to the day, but took the event seriously, as can be shown by how they protected the entrance to the Reserve Bank at the end of the day, just in case protesters decided to take an unplanned trip there.

FLOUR POWER

To kick off the day, a banner saying "Capitalism will cost the earth" was prominently hung across the top of the Railway Station, a feat that must have required a head for heights. The first act of the carnival was a party held outside the Freedom Shop. Free food and drink were served, and about 100 people attended. After a march down Cuba St., the carnival arrived at Manners Mall McDonald's. This was the largest attended event of the day (300+ people – numbers were hard to estimate as heaps of people just stayed for a wee while). About 100 free veggie burgers were distributed outside McShit and there was a huge queue (distributing things for free can be quite subversive in a capitalist society which reduces everything into a commodity object to be bought and sold). Heaps of

"What's wrong with McDonald's" leaflets were distributed. A protester dressed as Ronald McDonald offered himself as a target outside the front doors of the multinational exploiter. People threw water and flour bombs at Ronald; surprise, surprise, most "bombs" missed Ronald and instead hit the front doors of McShit, creating a gooey mess that hopefully was difficult to clean off. One flour bomb hit a policeman who became extremely angry but did not pursue his assailant.

From there, the carnival proceeded to the other end of Manners Mall, to protest against Nike retailer Rebel Sport. A noisy, intense protest of about 200+ people inside James Smith Market ensued. Nike were targeted because they are a good example of a capitalist multinational who use third world slave labour in the production of their shoes. About six cops protected Rebel Sport, though one protester got behind police lines and into the shop holding a placard "I'm Angry" to a huge cheer from the crowd.

MARCHING INTO ENEMY TERRITORY

From Manners Mall, the "Reclaim the City" march went down Lambton Quay, into the dark, foreboding high rise end of town where the buildings are designed to make you feel small. The march ended up in Midland Park in the heart of suitville. The PA system was turned up really loud and about 200+ people enjoyed a sit down in the park, which is normally a favourite haunt for office workers at lunchtime. Chalk was provided and heaps of anti-capitalist

slogans appeared on the concrete.

DISABLE THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE
From Midland Park, the carnival proceeded to the courtyard outside the seventh floor office of the Business Roundtable on the Terrace, their offices appropriately situated in a dark, black, ugly, menacing tower. The Business Roundtable are an influential capitalist lobby group made up of some of the wealthiest capitalists in Aotearoa who try and push the government into more and more extreme free-market policies. The Business Roundtable have become a sort of symbol of the selfishness and brutality of local capitalists in recent times (who have increased their profits and wealth very nicely indeed under successive New Right regimes in Aotearoa, whilst the rest of us have become much worse off), and so it was appropriate that the carnival ended outside their HQ. About 150+ attended the protest, which was highlighted by the burning of piles of fake money on the courtyard, and a good, sharp, short speech against the capitalist parasites of the Business Roundtable.

– Toby

Photos (L to R, top to bottom): Rebel Sport/Nike protest; Freedom Shop party; Ronald outside McDonald's; Midland Park; Manners Mall outside Rebel Sport; Rebel Sport protest; Cuba St. march; money burning outside the Business Roundtable HQ. For more carnival photos, see www.tao.ca/~cec/ (the CEC website) and www.scoop.co.nz (if you are lucky enough to have internet access).



may day around the world

Hundreds of May Day demonstrations and events happened all across the globe in over 24 countries. The global day of action against capitalism was celebrated in Aotearoa, Australia, Austria, Brasil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, India, Italy, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK and the USA. In many countries anti-capitalist events occurred in several cities. Typically the day was celebrated by some

**Kill Capitalism
Before It Kills
KENNY!
MAYDAY 2000
A Global Day
of Action!**



sort of anti-capitalist demonstration in the financial centre of a city, then followed by a street party. As well, heaps of traditional May Day rallies occurred everywhere from Turkey to Russia, from the Philippines to Angola. It seems that this year May Day saw some of the biggest protests for years. We can't hope to list all the events that happened around the world; a few are summarised below. For further reports, see <http://damn.tao.ca/mayday.htm> and www.infoshop.org

berlin mayday mayhem

"The sky looked grey so many stones flew". So said the Berlin Chief of Police after the usual Berlin riot on May Day. Over 10,000 people attended the "Revolutionary May 1st" demonstration. Police attacked the demo at the end of Oranien-Platz (a park) with the view to arrest protesters. As a result protesters

May Day in Berlin since 1987. (Autonomists are hard to define; they are grassroots leftists who non-dogmatically pick up their ideology from libertarian Marxism, leftist anarchism, and the counter-culture. Autonomists are the largest group on the extra-parliamentary left in Germany, as with many other European

countries.) In May Day 1987, the demo ended in a major riot in which the police were defeated and thrown out of the left-wing neighbourhood of Kreuzberg. Since then, it has become a tradition in Berlin for May Day to become a riot.

COP ARREST COP

Among the arrested protesters was one off-duty policeman from Leipzig. He was on holiday in Berlin when by coincidence he saw the "Revolutionary May 1st" demonstration pass by. Police attacked the demonstration as usual, and didn't hesitate to rough up innocent bystanders. Our tourist from Leipzig got so angry when riot cops hit him that he joined the demonstrators who were defending themselves by throwing stones and bottles and various portable objects.

According to the police, the policeman had thrown a bottle at a water-cannon when he was arrested. (A-Infos).

MEANWHILE IN HAMBURG...

Not to be outdone by Berlin, Hamburg also had a May Day riot. Clashes with police resulted in 134 arrests and 21 police being injured. Protesters threw stones at banks, smashed shop windows, and set bonfires alight in the streets.



fought back. Massive street-fighting resulted, with even a few barricades raised. Sounds like scenes were bordering on the revolutionary (or at least proto-revolutionary) as flowerpots were thrown out of windows onto the police by residents, and ladders were raised against the walls for protesters to escape. Tear gas filled the streets...

The riot was centred in the Kreuzberg district and lasted 15 hours. 279 police were injured, and 401 demonstrators arrested. *SchNEWS* reports one Swiss anarchist was killed during the riots.

The autonomist/anarchist movement has been demonstrating on

seoul, south korea

Over 15,000 workers and students protested in Seoul on a May Day march which demanded higher wages, a shorter working week, and protested against the takeover of local companies by foreign multinationals. Police waded into the demo and violent clashes resulted. Currently, there is a strike wave in South Korea centred on Daewoo car workers. Attempts by the government to repress the militant union movement has led (among other factors, such as opposition to privatisation) to a call for a general strike in June.

bolivia

May Day marches in a number of cities in Bolivia included anarchist contingents, something which has not been seen in the country for a long time. The situation is dicey in Bolivia at the moment: workers, students and campesinos came out in widespread protest against the imposition of martial law by the government in April. Confrontations followed and many protesters were wounded and some killed. Juventudes Libertarias (Libertarian Youth) is a newly formed collective of libertarian communists which is trying to set up an anarchist network, a weekly paper and distribute anarchist material. juventudes_libertarias@latinmail.com (A-Infos).

copenhagen, denmark

As part of the global day of action against capitalism, 1000 people (including anarchists, anti-fascists, autonomists, feminists and libertarian communists) demonstrated in Copenhagen. The original plan was to march past symbols of the social war being waged by the ruling powers, but this was not possible due to a massive deployment of riot cops. Protesters were forced to accept the cops demo route and many times cops attempted to break up the march. There were 6 arrests. The demo ended with a 10,000 strong anti-fascist open air concert. This demo was the first time the non-reformist left in Denmark has organised a joint demo since the defeat of the autonomist movement in the early 1990s (A-Infos).



London Reclaim the Streets organised, as part of the global day of action against capitalism, "guerilla gardening" in Parliament Square. The event attracted 12,000+ people. Protesters rolled up the turf in the square and laid it on the road in front of the Houses of Parliament. Trees, shrubs, bananas, magic mushrooms, pansies and spinach were planted. People hand drilled holes in the tarmac and planted flowers into them. Banners went up saying "Let London sprout!", "The worms will turn", and "The Earth is a common treasury for all". A maypole was erected and celebrations began. The statue of Winston Churchill was given a grass mohawk and spraypainted "Fat Tory Bastard". Parliament Square looked like it had been hit by a day-glo paint bomb. Then many gardeners tried to join the nearby traditional May Day march of 4,000 people (mostly trade unionists) in Trafalgar Square, in recognition that both protest groups had a common enemy: capitalism.

RIOT POLICE...POLICE RIOT

As usual, the real and significant violence on the day came from the riot police who were conducting the largest ever police operation in the history of London (over 6,000 were involved, keen to save face after they didn't know what hit them on June 18th last year). After a McDonald's and a bureau de change was trashed nearby, riot police attacked the demonstration. Police

snatch squads piled into protesters, many of whom received beatings. At one stage a protester with a tree on her head attempted to stop mounted police from entering Trafalgar Square by lying down in front of them; however, the police just marched around her. Police sealed off Trafalgar Square and slowly pushed protesters into it, trapping hundreds of protesters for hours.

The May Day anti-capitalist protest was not intended to be, like June 18th last year, a direct attempt to paralyse the financial centre of London. The idea behind the bit of mass landscape redesign was to present and celebrate a positive alternative to capitalism. However, the British media and politicians almost exclusively focussed upon the trashing of a McDonald's and some graffiti on the war cenotaph nearby up the street. A remarkably peaceful protest was thus denounced by PM Tony Blair as "mindless thuggery". The media often presented the event as if several thousand anarchists wanted to destroy everything in sight. Blair said "this kind of thing cannot be allowed to happen again" and it looks like there may be attempts to ban demonstrations against capitalism in Britain again. An example of a media fabrication comes from an ITN bulletin which claimed that the Rover workers' march wasn't allowed into Trafalgar square by the "anti-capitalists", which is false, because the police attempted to block the two protests from joining up.

reclaim the streets, wellington style

A remarkable Reclaim the Streets protest happened in Wellington recently. On Earth Day, which was celebrated in Aotearoa on April 29th, a group of about 100 protesters set forth to reclaim some Wellington streets from the motorcar. Protesters staged spontaneous sit ins on major intersections of Wellington streets, including the major routes in and out of the city. The sit ins went on for over an hour. Traffic backed up on the motorway as far as the eye could see. By the time police arrived in any number and threatened mass arrests, protesters simply went home. This was the first Reclaim the Streets Wellington has seen.

AOTEAROA ANARCHIST NEWS

A small demo in support of American prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was held in Wellington on May 13. A new anarchist zine, *The Jolly Roger*, has been produced in Auckland and one is rumoured to be planned for Dunedin. *The State Adversary* has been published by Wellington anarchists after a short hiatus (subs \$10 for 4 issues, address p.2). Wellington anarchists are also holding video nights every Wednesday at 5.30pm from 28 June at the Peace and Environment Centre, 2nd floor, 126 Vivian St. E-mail lists of interest: anarchynz-subscribe@egroups.com & NZActivism-subscribe@onelist.com

S11: over September 11-13 the Asia Pacific Economic Summit of the World Economic Forum (WEF) is being held in Melbourne. Over 800 chief executives are attending and large protests are planned. www.s11.org

france

The anarcho-syndicalist revolutionary union, the CNT-AIT (Confederacion Nacional des Travailleurs), organised May Day celebrations in over 20 towns across France, gathering around 1000 people in all the country. For example, a meeting in a poor, immigrant suburb of Toulouse attracted 100 people. Where it was possible, the CNT organised their acts separately from the "official" May Day celebrations (which are normally organised by the Stalinist French Communist Party). The decentralised CNT May Day celebrations were in accordance with the federalist principles of the CNT, and designed to counter the normal notion that confuses Paris with France. There is currently a resurgence of interest in anarcho-syndicalism in France and the CNT is experiencing a revival.

In Paris, somewhere between 1,500 to 3,000 anarchists marched in the traditional May Day rally, which was not a bad turnout. The anarchist march was organised by the Vignoles group. The largest group was from the CNT. Anarchists from all over the world, including representatives of other revolutionary unions, participated in the march. (A-Infos).

usa



Chicago, May Day

Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of US financial centres for anti-capitalist protests on May Day.

As far as we know, anti-capitalist events occurred in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Olympia, Seattle, Portland, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Boston and New Orleans. In Chicago, 900 protesters marched, including anarchist cheerleaders (!) who performed anti-capitalist routines. In New York 600 marched into Wall Street and 19 anarchists were arrested for concealing their faces! Clashes with police also occurred in Portland and Phoenix.

zurich, switzerland

A May Day march of 1,000 people organised by *Revolutionärer Aufbau* (Revolutionary Construction) in Zurich resulted in smashed shop windows and damaged cars in a BMW showroom. Riot police used water cannon, and fired tear gas and rubber bullets at the protesters.

beyond opposing mcdonald's

"capitalism? no thanks! we will burn your fucking banks" (an anarchist chant at seattle).

It is wonderful that there seems to be a growing global opposition to capitalism today.

However, much of this opposition is rather vague and incoherent. Some aspects of capitalism are opposed – such as the brutality of the unrestrained free market – but others aren't. Many people equate opposing large transnational corporations (Nike, McDonald's) with opposing capitalism in general. As well, many people equate opposing "globalisation" with opposing capitalism in general. We need to clearly state we are for the abolition of capitalism as a whole, *not just one part* (large corporations) or *type* (the globalisation of the free market) of the capitalist beast. If we don't, then we could easily be co-opted into becoming a safe, mild movement to reform capitalism.

CORPORATIONS RULE THE WORLD?

Corporations rule the world, right? Most transnational corporations have a bigger turnover than the entire GDP of Aotearoa. Fifty-one of the hundred largest economies in the world are transnational corporations. However, opposing corporate power is not opposing capitalism as a whole. It is just opposing the dominant form in which capitalism exists in present. So it is common sense for us to target corporations such as McDonald's and Shell as examples of how corporate capitalism operates today.

Eliminating or putting state controls on McDonald's or Bill Gates is not the answer. Another corporation or capitalist (like KFC, Burger King or Rupert Murdoch) will simply takeover the "market share" McShit or Gates once occupied. What we are opposing is not a few individual rogue corporations or a few nasty capitalist individuals, but an entire *social system*, a social relationship of class exploitation that permeates every aspect of society.

Whether capitalism takes the form of small business or big business, the motive is still the same: to expand, set forth and maximise profit through exploiting wage-labour. Whether your boss is small fry or Bill Gates, you are still a wage-slave, you still



have little or no control over the production process, you still work for the profit of someone else. It is not corporations that rule over us, but capital and the state. The abolition of capitalism means the universal suppression of the entire commodity system and bourgeois civilisation and everything that goes with it (money, wage-labour etc.).

GLOBALISATION: CAPITALISM WITHOUT APOLOGIES

The *City Voice* in its Wellington May Day report (CV is a mild, middle of the road Wellington paper), seemed to suggest opposing globalisation is the same as opposing capitalism in general (globalisation, for the sake of definition, here means the imposition of the free-market across the globe). Globalisation is just capitalism with its gloves off. It's capitalism without the apologies of the welfare state and the offer of increasing living standards to workers.

Globalisation has been very useful in that it has revealed to many the brutal nature of capitalism without being mystified by its glittering spectacle – that nature being to exploit workers and the planet to the maximum extent possible. As well, globalisation has concentrated power within a few large multinationals who decide what's best for us through bodies such as the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and IMF (International Monetary Fund), providing a focal point for opposition.

ABOLISH CAPITALISM, NOT JUST GLOBALISATION

However, opposing globalisation, the WTO, and IMF is not opposing capitalism. Whilst it is brilliant protests have occurred in Seattle, Davos and Washington against



the WTO, WEF and IMF, these protests have largely been symbolic. Capitalism still rampages on even if the WTO is not able to meet for a few days. What's essential is that this movement becomes more generalised – it needs to spread beyond an elite of activists (who often only seem content to create a media spectacle) to workers. This is not some anarchist socialist dogma; it is simply because capitalism is based upon the exploitation of (slave) wage-labour.

To really oppose capitalism, a working class movement which demands self-management of our workplaces and communities needs to arise. Such movements aren't a thing of the past, even in "industrialised" countries; recently, we have seen a wildcat strike movement in France in 1995 (when two million workers went on strike), and a wave of militant unionism in South Korea, culminating in a general strike in 1997 of 600,000 workers.

Capitalism will seek to recuperate the growing global anti-capitalist mood into something safe and non-threatening. It may do this through offering a few minor reforms of institutions such as the WTO and IMF to make them appear to be more democratic, or introduce minor controls on the international flow of capital. We need not be fooled by such reforms. Whatever form capitalism takes, be it mild (welfare state) or more brutal (globalisation), small business or big business, it is fundamentally based upon the exploitation of people and the planet. We need to abolish capitalism, not reform it.

– Toby

(for an excellent analysis of globalisation, see *Do or Die* # 8 (1999) "Globalisation – Origins, History, Analysis, Resistance", pp. 35-54.)